



CITY COUNCIL

Public Works Committee

Tuesday, June 16 2009
Meeting Report

Committee Members Attending: S. Fuhs, D. Sterner

Others Attending: O. Smith, C. Younger, C. Heminitz, C. Jones, L. Kelleher

Mr. Fuhs called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

Park Maintenance

Mr. Smith, chair of the Park and Rec Advisory Committee (PARC), described the PARC's assessment of the condition and maintenance of the City's parks and playgrounds. He explained that the group visited each of the City's parks and playgrounds with Mr. Zuber and completed a rating sheet for each park and playground. Those results were averaged out and are attached to the agenda. Mr. Smith stated that overall the condition of the parks and playgrounds are not bad but most require cosmetic improvements. He suggested using the youth work program and volunteers to assist Public Works with providing these cosmetic improvements during the warm weather months.

Mr. Jones stated that Public Works does use a summer, part-time program to handle these types of projects. He noted that this summer, part-time summer crews will also be assisted by those involved in the youth work program. The youth work program will help bolster summer part-time crews and allow the suggested cosmetic improvements. He stated that those in the youth work program will be assigned, in part, to Kyle Zeiber for Public Works and Wayne Cockrell for all other areas.

Mr. Jones noted that the continued reduction in the Public Works personnel workforce has hampered Public Works ability to get maintenance projects accomplished. He stated historically part-time Public Works workers are brought on board between April and June to undertake summer weather tasks such as grass cutting, trimming, painting, etc. Last year permission was not given to hire part-time Public Works worker until mid-summer, which limited the completion of maintenance projects.

Mr. Fuhs questioned Public Works ability to use prisoners to assist with Public Works maintenance projects. Mr. Jones stated that this was attempted several times in the past; however union issues were created as Public Works supervisors are not prison guards.

Mr. Jones stated that Mr. Zuber completes an assessment of each park and playground in the fall. Mr. Smith suggested that Mr. Zuber also complete an assessment in the spring to identify issues that have developed over the cold weather months.

Mr. Smith questioned Public Works openness to using community volunteers to handle light maintenance work in the City's parks and playgrounds. Ms. Kelleher stated that this volunteer program will be similar to the adopt-a-spot program. Mr. Jones stated that some arrangement could be worked out. He noted the willingness of a particular group to care for Neversink playground.

Mr. Jones stated that the 3rd and Spring and Essick playgrounds will be rehabilitated next year. Rehabilitation of the Northmont playground is scheduled for 2011. He stated that over a ten (10) year period twenty (20) playground tot lots have been rehabilitated. He noted that the rehabilitation of these tot lots and play areas continue. After all City playgrounds are rehabilitated, the cycle begins again.

Mr. Smith noted PARC's desire to redo the City's ten year park, playground, and open space plan using the old plan as the template. Mr. Jones stated that the PARC could certainly participate but noted the importance of a consultant to consider the City's demographics and needs, along with the citizen input. He noted that the consultant considers the existence of parks, playgrounds, and open space city-wide and makes recommendations for additions and modifications.

Mr. Fuhs stated that creation of public private partnerships to maintain parks and playgrounds will be discussed at the July Public Works Committee meeting. He asked Mr. Smith to return for this discussion.

Review Proposed CIP Amendment

Mr. Fuhs stated that the Administration has presented a proposed amendment to the Capital Improvement Plan:

- Reallocating \$40,000 from the Hillside Playground Project to Kerper's Landing Renovation
- Providing \$400,000 for the extension of River Road
- Providing \$200,000 for the Main Street infrastructure improvement program

The following projects have been removed from the 2009 Capital Improvement Program.

- \$2.5 million for a new Hampden Marion fire station.
- \$120,000 for a Public Works front end loader, \$300,000 for street sweepers, and \$250,000

for alley and right of way improvements.

The following projects remain in the CIP

- \$230,000 for Duryea Drive guardrails
- \$160,000 for Northmont playground renovations
- \$1.3 million for repairs to First Energy Stadium
- \$450,000 for bridge repair.
- \$150,000 for City Hall improvements
- \$200,000 for Main Street infrastructure improvements

2010 projects are as follows:

- \$400,000 for River Road extension
- \$50,000 for Public Works tractor
- \$60,000 for Stadium light upgrades (First Energy Stadium)
- \$40,000 for Kerper's Landing renovations

Mr. Jones noted that the Hillside playground renovation project was shifted from Capital to the CDBG.

How to Save Capital Project

Mr. Cituk was not present to provide the requested report.

East Ends Contract Update

The group discussed using a two (2), three (3), or five (5) year lease extension. Mr. Younger stated that he would discuss such with East Ends. The negotiated and approved lease would need to be ratified by Council by ordinance.

City Park Bandshell

Mr. Jones stated that the City Park Bandshell pond is currently under design. Mr. Waltman noted citizen concerns regarding the effect this project will have on aquatic life. Mr. Jones stated that as the pond is drained, fish and other aquatic beings congregate in pools and pockets along the bed of the pond. Public Works crews rescue the fish and aquatic life and transfer them to Bernhart's Lake.

Mr. Jones stated that when viewing the pond from the front of the Bandshell, one can see that the majority of the pond falls to the right side of the Bandshell. The City Park master plan calls for the reduction to the pond located directly in front of the Bandshell to allow spectators to sit closer to the stage.

Update on Collection of Grass Clippings

Mr. Jones noted the difficulty in dealing with grass clipping as they are prohibited from going to landfills and they cannot be used for mulching.

He stated that due to the outcry of the public, Public Works will continue to collect grass clippings through the 2009 summer season. Any change occurring in 2010 will be widely publicized prior to the implementation of the change.

The Public Works Committee adjourned at approximately 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk

FOLLOW UP ITEMS

- Creation of public private partnerships to maintain parks and playgrounds (July)
- Review audits of capital projects underway and completed.
- East End contract updates
- Addition of dog runs in select City parks & cost of dog cleanup locations
- Cost of Dog Cleanup locations
- Speeding on Kenhorst Blvd. and Museum Road.
- Cleanup of former Sovereign building on Lancaster Ave.
- Abandoned home on South 15th Street
- Study of Kline Avenue to become one way street.
- Collection of grass clippings
- Flyers regarding parking for ball games at Pendora Park
- Pot hole in sidewalk at 5th & Penn
- Pedestrian light repair
- Clean up of 400 block of Spring Garden St